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ABSTRACT

In this essay, application of the equal-status contact hypothesis to the policy of integrated housing is reassessed by reviewing the findings from two studies of interracial public housing. Assessment of the relative level of interracial intimacy in the integrated projects is hindered by measures lacking in clarity and comprehensiveness, but the data actually reported suggest that both inter-and intraracial contacts were not particularly intimate. Although not designed to replicate or extend the findings of these studies, a study of four integrated, low-income public housing projects in Syracuse contained data which raise further doubts about interracial intimacy. The studies are interpreted in light of the voluntaristic nature of neighboring in urban society. (Author)

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INTERRACIAL HOUSING: A REASSESSMENT OF THE CONTACT HYPOTHESIS*

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ABSTRACT

With a view toward a self-critical, cumulative applied sociology, application of the equal-status contact hypothesis to the policy of integrated housing is reassessed by reviewing the findings from two studies of interracial public housing. Comparisons of integrated vs. segregated housing in the Deutsch and Collins study, and of "nears" and "fars" in a study by Wilner and associates, consistently show white residents living in proximity to blacks expressed more favorable attitudes toward and were more sociable with blacks. Assessment of the relative level of interracial intimacy in the integrated projects is hindered by measures lacking in clarity and comprehensiveness, but the data actually reported suggest both inter- and intraracial contacts were not particularly intimate.

Although not designed to replicate or extend the findings of these studies, a study of four integrated, low-income public housing projects in Syracuse contained data which raise further doubts about interracial intimacy. A majority of residents' two most intimate neighboring choices involved those who were both racially similar and lived nearby. An even higher level of racial homophily was evident in the two friendship choices of residents, and data on location and length of acquaintance pose the question as to whether public housing can be assumed to be insulated from the larger community in inducing distinctive forms of interracial intimacy.

The studies are interpreted in light of the voluntaristic nature of neighboring in urban society. Sociability is also inhibited by competition for scarce resources among the poor of both races, a violation of one stipulation in the equal-status contact hypothesis. While the development of black consciousness may test the policy of integrated housing anew, in the long run a variety of antipoverty programs, integrated housing included, could reduce competition among the poor and have a salutary effect on race relations as well. Hopefully, such programs would be an intrinsic part of a more viable applied sociology.

INTERRACIAL HOUSING: A REASSESSMENT OF THE CONTACT HYPOTHESIS

Sociologists with an applied bent submit that, apparent inadequacies of sociological knowledge aside, extant propositions can and should be applied to current circumstances, but the record of instances in which such applications have been made is rather uneven. One significant exception to this generalization is in the area of ethnic relations, as social scientists have had a continuing interest in fostering more amicable relations between ethnic groups. By pointing out the deleterious effects of "separate but equal" schools, sociologists and other behavioral scientists contributed in some measure to the 1954 Supreme Court decision to desegregate public schools. Perhaps less well known, but important in its own right, was the 1950 decision of the Newark Housing Authority to desegregate its public housing projects, a decision influenced by Deutsch and Collins' research comparing two segregated Newark projects with two integrated projects in New York City (on the alteration in policy, see Deutsch and Collins, 1951:130-131). Present indications are that these will be two of many landmarks in the increased participation of social scientists in policy formulation.

As applied sociology gains respectability, however, we may well find it has been defined much too narrowly. It is not enough to apply theoretical propositions to policy as if either theory or policy will stand the test of time. A <u>viable</u> applied sociology necessitates a continuous, self-conscious assessment of the interplay between theory and policy. Just as policy may change with theoretical accumulation, so too applications to policy could be construed as a "test" of theory to be fed back for refinements in theory.

Furthermore, changes in the social context call for reevaluation of the translation from presumably universalistic propositions to concrete situations. What this means, then, is that applied sociologists become as self-critical of their endeavor as are basic sociologists.

As a step toward a self-critical applied sociology, a reassessment of the application of the equal-status contact hypothesis to the policy of integrated housing is proposed. The findings of the two major studies in this area, those of Morton Deutsch and Mary Evans Collins (1951) and of Daniel Wilner and his colleagues (1955), will be reviewed to ascertain how much patterns of interracial sociability were altered by residence in integrated housing and, furthermore, to relate their findings to the current scene. We will be less concerned with the fact there were consistent differences between occupancy patterns in the Deutsch and Collins study or between "nears" and "fars" in the study by Wilner et al. (hereafter referred to as the Wilner study) than with the relative level of interracial intimacy in the integrated projects. The analysis is not intentionally racist, nor, hopefully, is it unintentionally so. Above all, any attempt to use it for such purposes is categorically repudiated.

THE CONTACT HYPOTHESIS

Whereas most interracial contacts occur in the context of superordinate-subordinate relationships, the equal-status contact hypothesis specifies prejudice can be reduced when that pattern is broken and races meet as equals. Actually, the issue is a bit more complex than that, as is evident from Allport's (1958:267) summarization of studies on the topic:

> Prejudice (unless deeply rooted in the character structure of the individual) may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of common goals. The effect is greatly enhanced if this contact is sanctioned by institutional supports (i.e., by law, custom, or local atmosphere), and if it is of a sort that leads to the perception of common interests and common humanity between members of the two groups.

Implicit in his statement are the stipulations that the races meet in a situation in which there is no competition for scarce resources or the larger community is not strongly opposed to such contacts (see also Deutsch and Collins, 1951:126; Wilner, et al., 1955:4). Although it is not entirely clear integrated housing generally meets all these conditions, Allport (1958:260) raising the issue as to whether mere residence together leads to common pursuits, and Deutsch and Collins (1951:125-126) further cautioning against a token representation of blacks, extremely hostile community attitudes, and equivocal enforcement of policy by housing officials, the assumption of both studies (Deutsch and Collins, 1951:6-8; Wilner, et al., 1955:27-28) was that the integrated projects selected would sufficiently meet the conditions of the hypothesis to predict a reduction in prejudice.

One of the major ways equal-status contacts are promoted by integrated housing is by means of proximity of the races. In their study of married student housing projects, Festinger and his colleagues (1963:33-59) had found that closeness in physical and "functional" distance increased the chances of "passive contacts" between residents, so it could be inferred (Deutsch and Collins,

1951:32-34; Wilner, et al., 1955:6-9) a similar contingency would apply to interracial contacts. The everyday activities of members of the opposite race would be more visible in integrated projects, and, as both sets of researchers noted (Deutsch and Collins, 1951: 65; Wilner, et al., 1955:11), a project resident would be more likely to observe other residents interacting on an interracial basis, perhaps leading to the supposition the social climate is favorable toward interracial contacts.

Using racial ratio as the criterion, Deutsch and Collins (1951: 40-41) matched each of two integrated New York projects with a project in Newark where the races were segregated by area. One project in New York containing 70 per cent blacks was matched to a Newark project which was two-thirds black; the other New York project containing 40 per cent blacks was matched with a Newark project one-half black. The Wilner study (Wilner, et al., 1955:14-17) was designed to partially replicate the earlier one. However, the matched projects selected were located in smaller cities outside the New York metropolitan area, and none of the four projects contained more than 10 per cent blacks. Furthermore, the races in the segregated projects were segregated by building, rather than by area.

On the assumption the races lived closer on the average in integrated projects, Deutsch and Collins compared occupancy patterns. They found the white housewives in integrated projects to be more sociable with and express more favorable attitudes toward fellow black residents than did the white women in segregated projects, findings apparently not attributable to selectivity in the attitudes of women who moved into integrated projects. Overall, their data are

striking because of the consistent differences between housewives in the two occupancy patterns on a gamut of standardized measures of prejudice. In the Wilner study, the combination of building segregation and the small proportion of blacks in the projects led to a decision to compare those living "near" or "far" from blacks within each type of occupancy pattern (for details on the definition of "near" and "far" in each project, see Wilner, et al., 1955:23). Using much the same dependent variables as Deutsch and Collins, Wilner and his associates found that, regardless of occupany pattern, "nears" were more sociable with and less prejudiced toward blacks than were "fars." However, when proximity categories were aggregated so as to compare occupancy patterns (Wilner, et al., 1955:113-128), the differences between occupancy patterns were smaller and less consistent than in the Deutsch and Collins study. They (Wilner, et al., 1955: 129-141) reasoned that, among other things, the differences between occupancy patterns in average proximity were less in their study than the earlier one. Recasting their sample into more extreme proximity categories and then comparing their data to those of Deutsch and Collins supported this interpretation (Wilner, et al., 1955:142-146). One implication of the comparative data is that public housing officials should caution against a token representation of blacks in integrated housing. As Wilner et al. (1955:146) note, the marked differences between occupancy patterns in the Deutsch and Collins study could be largely attributed to the high proportion of blacks in the integrated projects, ergo most whites lived next door to blacks.

This brief overview of the effects of proximity observed in both studies cannot do justice to the scope of their analyses; other

variables were investigated as well. In particular, the Wilner study explicates complex relationships among "estimated" initial attitudes, proximity, social climate, and contact as to their effects on prejudice reduction. Based on an analysis of the dual effects of contact and "perceived" social climate on prejudice reduction, Wilner et al. (1955:109-110) propose a model of attitude change which will be briefly sketched. Although the outcome of equal-status contact is obviously dependent on a vareity of factors, including the strength of initial attitudes, perceptions the social climate is favorable toward interracial contacts, similarities of the residents on characteristics other than economic status, and so on, as with Deutsch and Collins (1951:33-34) Wilner and his associates see interracial encounters as confronting whites with a discrepancy between their previously held stereotypes and the actual behavior of blacks. Change in these stereotypes facilitates greater intimacy, which in turn affects attitudes. That is, successive alterations in attitudes and intimacy reciprocally affect the other until some level of equilibrium is reached. Perceptions of the social climate accelerate or limit the process, and may even change attitudes in the absence of actual contact. All in all, the amount of reduction in prejudice is contingent on the level of intimacy, and vice versa.

We are struck by the care with which both sets of researchers used sundry measures to detect subtle changes in prejudice and, more specifically, differential change in the components of prejudice (beliefs, feelings, and policy orientations). However, we do not feel they took as great care in operationalizing intimacy, and some gaps are evident in the data they did report. Multivariate analyses

of the relative effects of perceived social climate, contact, etc., on prejudice reduction, and the paradigm on the reciprocal interaction of intimacy and attitudes notwithstanding, neither set of researchers fully explicated the implications of their data on intimacy. The data which are reported suggest the relationships established in integrated housing were not very intimate and, by implication, attitudes did not change greatly either. A detailed scrutiny of the data from both studies as to the relative level of intimacy actually attained in the integrated projects may support our argument that, interracial or not, the "social climate" of public housing projects is not such as to support intimate relationships.

INTIMACY IN THE PROJECTS

Our strategy in reviewing data on intimacy from both studies is to assess the relative level of sociability in integrated projects without gainsaying the consistent differences between occupancy patterns or between nears and fars. This does entail a devil's advocate position inasmuch as the data will be carefully scrutinized more for what they don't reveal than what they do. That some change was evidenced in integrated housing is not at issue, but how much change there was is moot. A detailed exposition of the sociability measures and data reported should bear this out.

As one index of sociability in the projects, Deutsch and Collins (1951:56-58) reported data on four types of "neighborly" activities, viz., visiting back and forth; helping one another with shopping, care of children, or when someone is sick; participating in informal club activities, such as card, sewing, or ironing clubs;

and going out together to movies, shopping, or downtown. When tabulated in terms of the number of diverse activities white housewives engaged in with whites or blacks, differences between occupancy patterns as to interracial neighboring were obvious. That is, 99 per cent of the whites in one segregated project and 96 per cent in the other reported no neighborly contacts with blacks, as compared to 61 and 28 per cent in the two integrated projects. On the other hand, from 88 to 94 per cent of the white housewives in all four projects reported at least one neighborly contact with fellow whites, with whites in integrated projects evidencing a slightly larger number of such contacts with fellow whites. Insofar as blacks are concerned, the only data reported are that 44 of the 50 blacks interviewed in segregated projects and 14 of 49 in integrated projects had no neighborly contacts with whites.

Unfortunately, the data reported do not adequately illuminate the nature of neighboring activities. First of all, residents were not queried about <u>how often</u> they engaged in each kind of activity with <u>both</u> blacks and whites (see Deutsch and Collins, 1951:163-164). It is possible residents engaged in particular activities only once. Second, tabulating only the sheer <u>number</u> of different activities tells us nothing about which activities were most common. A resident who cared for an ill neighbor would be considered to be as "neighborly" as one who only played cards with neighbors. It would appear the full range of activities was uncommon among residents, as <u>at best</u> 18 per cent of the white housewives in one integrated project engaged in all four activities with other whites. These same considerations make it difficult to interpret the finding that white housewives in integrated housing reported more diverse contacts with whites

than blacks despite approximately equal or greater "opportunities" for interacting with blacks (40 per cent and 70 per cent of the populations in integrated housing were blacks).

A second measure in the Deutsch and Collins study (1951:55) concerned fellow residents known "pretty well." Specifically, they were asked: "Do you usually call the women you know pretty well here in the project by their first or last names?" This was followed by questions as to how many they knew "pretty well" and if any were blacks (on the specific questions, see Deutsch and Collins, 1951:163). Only 3 per cent of the white women in segregated projects as compared to 49 and 77 per cent in the integrated projects knew at least one black "pretty well." Unfortunately, there is no way of ascertaining how many blacks were included in the total pool of fellow residents known "pretty well" by the white housewives in integrated housing. The figure could be as low as one. Note also that fully 51 per cent of the whites in one integrated project didn't list even one black among residents they knew pretty well.

Finally, residents were asked (Deutsch and Collins, 1951:162-163): "How many people in the project do you consider to be your close friends?" They then listed the five they knew "best" and which of the five were blacks. Deutsch and Collins (1951:56) report that none of the white housewives in the segregated projects, as compared to 27 and 62 per cent of the whites in integrated projects, included at least one black among the five they knew "best." Similarly consistent differences between occupancy patterns were found when blacks were queried about white friends. As in the earlier measure, we do not know how many of the five were of the opposite race, although it

is striking that in the integrated project containing 40 per cent blacks fully 73 per cent of the whites did not include even one black among those they knew best. This Deutsch and Collins (1951:60) partly attributed to a language barrier, i.e., some of the residents in that particular project spoke mostly Yiddish.

Whites in integrated projects had more close friends living within their projects than did those in segregated projects, but there was no difference between occupancy patterns as to the number of close friends living outside (Deutsch and Collins, 1951:74-75). Whether or not this lends support to their contention the integrated projects were more cohesive (Deutsch and Collins, 1951:76-77) depends partly on how many friendships crossed racial lines, a datum not reported.

Turning now to the Wilner study, the measure of neighborliness reported there (Wilner, et al., 1955:28-33) differs from that of Deutsch and Collins. Wilner and his associates coded the characteristic level of interaction with blacks in terms of four levels: no interaction whatsoever with blacks; exchanging greetings in casual encounters; stopping to talk with one another in casual encounters; and participating in one or more types of neighborly activities, including customarily visiting one another, doing things together (shopping, etc.), and helping one another out in any of a number of ways (babysitting, etc.). As compared to "fars," whites living relatively "near" blacks within both types of occupancy patterns (i.e., integrated vs. building-segregated) consistently reported more intimate contacts with blacks. However, in only one instance does a majority report at least one kind of neighborly activity with blacks,

i.e., 55 per cent of the nears in one integrated project, the next highest figure being 34 per cent for nears in the other integrated project. Furthermore, relatively few residents engaged in all three types of neighborly activity, the highest figure being 30 per cent of the nears in one integrated project, with the remaining percentages ranging from 0 to 17. Comparisons were also undertaken with finer gradations of proximity. Although these data reveal consistent differences as well, let us focus on those whites living next door to blacks. In one integrated project, 65 per cent of the whites living next door to blacks reported at least one kind of neighboring activity with blacks, but the comparable figure for whites living next door to blacks in the other integrated project is only 46 per cent.

All in all, despite a somewhat more sophisticated measure of neighborliness, the data from the Wilner study are problematic: (1) the frequency of interaction at each level of neighborliness is not reported; (2) how common specific activities were is unknown; (3) the data utilizing finer distinctions in proximity are not differentiated according to whether residents participated in one, two, or three kinds of activities; and (4) a substantial minority of whites living next door to blacks report superficial contacts with them. With respect to (4), it would be hard to argue there was a lack of "opportunities."

In contrast to whites, blacks were in a distinct minority in all projects, i.e., they had many opportunities for contacts with whites. They (Wilner, et al., 1955:33) found that at least half of the blacks in each of the four projects participated in one or more neighborly activities with whites, and only 3 of the 145 interviewed had no contacts whatsoever with whites.

Among whites who chatted with blacks in their encounters, a range of topics were discussed (Wilner, et al., 1955:36-37). Those living near blacks within each type of occupancy pattern discussed a wider range of topics with them than did the fars the topics including schools, children, husbands, the projects, the Korean War, etc. The major problem with these data is that no comparisons are available as to what topics whites or blacks typically discussed with race-similars.

The data on friendship in the Wilner study are rather sketchy (Wilner, et al., 1955:59-60). No data were reported on the friendship circles of whites. On the other hand, in three of the four projects blacks reported having more close friends in the project who were black than white; in one integrated project, blacks had as many close white friends as black friends in the project. That is, as the researchers themselves noted, blacks found it easier to make friends with other blacks despite the preponderance of whites (90 per cent) in the projects. Data on the size of friendship circles were not reported.

Both studies (Deutsch and Collins, 1951:79-80; Wilner, et al., 1955:38-40) contained data on the "feeling tone" of relationships between whites and blacks. Based on coder's evaluations of a series of questions on feelings toward blacks, only 0 to 6 per cent of the whites in any project were considered to be on "bad" terms with fellow black residents. The majority of whites in integrated projects (60 and 69 per cent) were characterized as having "friendly" relations with blacks, while the majority in segregated projects (87 and 88 per cent) had no relations at all with them. When whites in the Wilner study

were asked whether their experiences with blacks in the project were pleasant or unpleasant, very few in any proximity category (from 2 to 17 per cent) reported solely unpleasant experiences. The modal response (from 42 to 70 per cent of the nears and from 57 to 83 per cent of the fars) was that experiences with blacks were neither notably pleasant or unpleasant. A minority (from 28 to 36 per cent of the nears and from 12 to 25 per cent of the fars) reported exclusively pleasant experiences. Aside from the obvious differences by proximity, it is difficult to judge the true level of friendliness in the projects.

We have purposely focused on reported behavior in assessing the studies. Whatever the relationship between attitudes and behavior, in the final analysis the most crucial test of a policy of integration involves equity in interracial behavior. To be sure, behavioral cues must be such that the minority cannot infer prejudice or condescension in the attitudes of the majority, but behavior is the ultimate criterion nonetheless. Given incomplete data and the kinds of measures used in both studies, it is hard to come to a definitive conclusion as to the level of interracial intimacy in the integrated projects. What little can be gleaned from the data actually reported suggests that, effects of proximity aside, interracial contacts were not particularly intimate. Indeed, there is some question as to the intimacy of relationships between whites.

COMPARATIVE DATA: THE PUBLIC HOUSING AND SOCIAL MOBILITY STUDY

Although not specifically designed to replicate or extend the findings of the earlier studies, and therefore not definitive in

resolving the ambiguities of the data in them, the Public Housing and Social Mobility Study of the Syracuse University Youth Development Center included data on sociability which raise further doubts concerning the level of interracial intimacy in integrated housing. The study focused on four low-income public housing projects given the pseudonyms Evans, Grant, Park, and Stern. All four projects were integrated, but racial composition varied: 4 per cent of the 200 households in Evans, 10 per cent of the 528 households in Grant, 76 per cent of the 677 households in Park, and 31 per cent of the 213 households in Stern were headed by blacks. The data to be reported here are based on a survey of 462 households undertaken in 1963. The use of varying sampling ratios insured the inclusion of at least one hundred households from each project. While a basic priority of the survey was to interview parents of minor children, data from underrepresented households, specifically households containing elderly couples or individuals, were weighted for purposes of analysis (for more details on the larger study, see Kriesberg, 1970).

Two batteries of questions from the survey are especially pertinent here: (1) The respondents were asked: "How many neighbors around here do you know well enough to say hello to?" Depending on the number mentioned, a maximum of two sociometric choices was selected with the instruction: "Now I have a few questions about the two neighbors you have the most to do with. Tell me their names so we know we're talking about the same person." (2) They were also asked: "How many friends do you have that you <u>feel close</u> to?" Similar to the previous series, a maximum of two friendship choices was ascertained: "Now, I have a few questions about the two closest

friends you have the most to do with. Tell me their names so we know we're talking about the same person." In each of the series respondents were queried about characteristics of the people they chose, including location, sex, marital status, race, religion, occupation, kinship, and length of acquaintance. Only a few of these variables will be reported here.

Some of the differences between this study and the earlier ones are obvious; others not as much so. First, all the projects in the present study are integrated and unmatched in racial composition, allowing for the detection of interracial sociability under conditions of varying opportunities for equal-status contact. Second, the questions relating to interracial intimacy probably are less obtrusive than in the earlier studies, where the entire interview was devoted to interracial matters. Closely allied, both sets of researchers had used a variety of questions to see if there were any interracial contacts of particular kinds (at least that is suggested by the manner in which their data are reported), whereas race was but one of many status variables in the present study. Third, the measures of "neighborliness" are not comparable at all, the earlier studies focusing on neighborly activities and the measure in the current study having frequency of interaction as an implicit criterion. (The sociometric measure may not tap the dimensions of cooperation or obligation, but 46 per cent of the neighboring relationships involved daily interaction and 87 per cent of the neighbors interacted at least once a week.) The indices of friendship in all three studies similarly imply affect, except two rather than five choices were allowed in the present study. A frequency of interaction criterion is

also implicit in the two choices, but nonetheless the friendship relations are probably more intimate than in the earlier studies. Finally, although respondents in the Public Housing and Social Mobility Study were asked to select neighbors "around here," neither set of choices were specifically restricted to fellow public housing residents; the data on interracial friendships reported in the former studies referred to friends within housing. Our purpose in reporting the data on sociometric choices is to show the implications of such a restriction, as well as to compare interracial choices at two levels of intimacy.

Data on the two sets of choices are presented in Table I. Looking first at neighboring choices, it is noteworthy that in five of the eight cells of Table IA. over four-fifths of the neighboring relationships are racially homophilous, that is, involve those who are racially similar. The three cells with lower percentages represent instances where residents are in a minority in the population (blacks in Evans and Grant, whites in Park), but blacks are in a minority in Stern and they are comparable to whites in choosing race-similars. There is no straightforward relationship between minority-majority representation and the level of homophily in these projects. Indeed, it is remarkable that two-thirds of the choices of blacks in Evans, where they constitute only four per cent of the population, involve other blacks. When analysis is confined to neighboring relations established subsequent to residence in the other three projects (Cagle, 1968), the use of spatial controls reveals that variations in the choice of race-similars cannot be explained by the clustering of races within subareas of the projects. Overall, most residents choose

those who are both racially similar and live relatively close, i.e., within the same multistory building or the same linear block or courtyard for two-story buildings so arranged. Evidently the projects are sufficiently dense and heterogeneous that a resident can and does find a few race-similars to neighbor with.

(Table I about here.)

The data in Table IB. graphically reveal how the most intimate relationships are reserved for race-similars. These data do not necessarily contradict the findings of the earlier studies inasmuch as they represent a highly selective subset of a resident's total circle of acquaintances, some of whom may be members of the opposite race, but by the same token they do suggest intimacy and racial homophily are directly related. Not only are most of these friendship relations homophilous, there is also some question as to how many of them can be attributed to the "opportunities" for contact implicit in public housing residence. Only a minority of the friendship choices involve fellow public housing tenants: Evans, 28.6 per cent; Grant, 28.6 per cent; Park, 48.0 per cent; and Stern, 26.0 per cent. The picture is further complicated by the fact some of the within-project choices represent relationships initiated prior to the time the respondent moved into public housing. This is particularly true in Park. Of the friendship relations between Park residents, 37.4 per cent were initiated at least one year prior to the time respondents moved into Park. The corresponding percentages for Evans, Grant, and Stern are 16.3, 26.0, and 18.5, respectively. Even for Park tenants, then, only a minority of the friends they chose were fellow tenants met

subsequent to public housing residence. Inasmuch as we don't know the specific circumstances in which respondents met their friends - some friends living outside might be former tenants - these data are not definitive, but combined with the other data they do raise serious doubts as to the extent to which integrated housing promotes interracial friendships. So long as tenants can sustain friendship relations with former neighbors, can find a few race-similars in integrated housing, or can initiate or maintain relationships at work or in other contexts, integrated housing cannot be assumed to be insulated from the larger community in inducing distinctive forms of sociability.

DISCUSSION

Obligatory relationships between spatially proximate households are rare in contemporary urban society; neighbors are no longer bound together in prescriptive relations supported by tradition (Heberle, 1960). To the urbanite a neighbor is merely someone who lives nearby. This is not to say neighbors may not become friends under certain circumstances, but such relationships would be initiated and sustained voluntarily, depending on individual preferences. The data presented above suggest public housing projects are by no means distinctive in this respect. To be sure, the social climate in integrated housing may be "favorable" toward interracial neighboring (Deutsch and Collins, 1951:64-70; Wilner, et al., 1955:40-45), but perhaps only in the rather limited sense interracial sociability is permitted or at least not specifically disapproved. That same "permissive" atmosphere allows a resident to neighbor only with race-similars, or not to neighbor at all. Carrying the argument a step farther, it is

entirely possible people move into integrated public housing precisely because they know neighboring is not obligatory, so they can choose their own style of neighboring. Young and Willmott (1962:147-169) report that working-class whites who moved from Bethnal Green to the housing estate of Greenleigh were struck by the fact Greenleigh residents "kept to themselves." Residents of public housing can keep to themselves, if they so choose, or they can interact with neighbors on a selective basis.

To Deutsch and Collins (1951:7) integrated public housing represented one of the few natural settings in which equal-status contacts would be prolonged. The races are relatively equal in integrated public housing - equal in their deprivation. They move into public housing primarily because they are disadvantaged in the private housing market (Bellin and Kriesberg, 1967; Cagle and Deutscher, 1970); they look to public housing as providing amenities they could not otherwise obtain at comparable cost. While it is undoubtedly true many whites would not move into integrated housing because of their prejudice, desperate housing need may overcome other inhibitions for those who are poor (Cf. Deutsch and Collins, 1951:45-47; Wilner, et al., 1955:27). Equality of deprivation is not especially conducive to interracial amity, or to friendships between race-similars, for that matter. As Keller (1968:49) has noted, the need for mutual aid is greatest among the poor, but suspicion, distrust, and fear of others may actually inhibit it. Rainwater's (1970) study of an all-black public housing project details the pervasive distrust of neighbors and the short-lived, ambivalent friendship relations existent under conditions of discrimination and poverty. Contrary to one

stipulation of the equal-status contact hypothesis, poor people are in competition for scarce resources, a competition extending to race-similars as well. Integrated public housing may not be the best context in which to test the hypothesis after all.

An alternate explanation of the difference in findings between the Public Housing and Social Mobility Study and the earlier two studies is that the former documents a decline in interracial amity. While we tend to discount this explanation, it would be more difficult to discount the possibility there have been changes, perhaps rather drastic changes, since data for the Public Housing and Social Mobility Study were gathered in 1963. Past studies of ethnic relations could be designed on the assumption blacks favored integration, whites being the major stumbling block to better ethnic relations (see esp. Deutsch and Collins, 1951:44). Scattered data in the two studies (Deutsch and Collins, 1951; Wilner, et al., 1955) do bear out the assumption blacks desired more amicable relations between the races, at least at the time the studies were undertaken. Whether that would be true now is moot. The development of black consciousness in recent years could radically alter the picture. First of all, there is the question as to how many blacks want to move into integrated housing. Even if the press of poverty is such that they do move in, the remaining question is whether they want to interact with whites. Data gathered now might show even greater bifurcation in neighboring than was evidenced in 1963, although contrary to our previous argument, there may be greater cohesiveness among blacks than existed before. In the short run, then, we suspect interracial sociability will become increasingly problematic in integrated public housing, but,

barring a more accurate charting of changes occurring in the black community, that statement must be made with some trepidation.

The major dependent variable in the earlier studies, prejudice, has received scant attention here. A recent exchange of viewpoints (Ajzen, et al., 1970; Deutscher, 1969; Ehrlich, 1969; LaPiere, 1969; Lastrucci, 1970; Tarter, 1970) on the validity of attitude measures, the specificity or generality of attitudes across situations, and the ambiguous nexus between attitudes and behavior could provide the foundation for a thorough reappraisal of the attitude measures in both studies. On the other hand, observation of what seems to be an already inordinate emphasis on prejudice in research on intergroup relations, on the detection of subtle attitudinal changes at the expense of behavioral indicators, prompted this critique. As Ehrlich (1969:29) points out, the presumed inconsistency between attitudes and behavior may be partly attributed to inadequate behavioral measures:

> While the operations for attitude-scale construction are relatively well standardized, the operations for observing and recording behavior, particularly in natural settings, are generally unstandardized and problem-specific. Further, while the items of attitude scales are presumably a representative set of statements from the attitude domain studied, most behavioral units selected for study have been chosen on a nonsystematic or ad hoc basis. It would seem plausible, therefore, to attribute some degree of recorded inconsistency to these less rigorous measures of overt behavior in intergroup situations.

In the final analysis, what we want to know is whether living near members of another race as status-equals leads to actual changes in behavior, to more amicable relations between them. Under the circumstances, it would seem as though as much energy should be expended in measuring discrimination as has already been devoted to the measurement of prejudice.

CONCLUSION

While the evidence presented here may seem more circumstantial than definitive, still it does provide grounds for skepticism as to the efficacy of integrated public housing in inducing interracial intimacy. But it should also be noted public housing may not be far different from any low-income neighborhood insofar as the quality of neighboring is concerned. Nascent black consciousness could alter this status quo by increasing cohesiveness among blacks, and it is even possible the policy of integrated housing might be tried anew, this time by <u>black</u> intransigence. Before concluding integrated public housing cannot ameliorate racial antipathy, however, it might be well to keep in mind that even though interracial intimacy may not be induced by equal-status contact, it is also unlikely without it. Integrated public housing falls short of expectations precisely because it does not meet all the conditions of the equal-status contact hypothesis enunciated by Allport (1958:250-267). The competition for scarce resources endemic to poor neighborhoods (housing being one source of competition) inhibits perception of common interests and the pursuit of common goals. By implication, anti-poverty programs aimed at altering the basic inequities of poverty

and promoting community solidarity in the long run could have a salutary effect on race relations as well. If combined with other programs and available on more than a token basis, integrated public housing could contribute in some measure to this process.

It would be trite but true to conclude more research is needed. Actually, what we envision for the future is much more encompassing than that, namely, a viable applied sociology which is as cumulative and self-correcting as basic research is presumed to be. Neither should applied sociology be merely an afterthought to basic research. All too often applied sociology is simply taken to mean the application of sociological principles to policy decisions, with failures in policy attributed to faulty translation from theory to practice rather than inadequacies in the theory. To be sure, policy ideally should be based on empirically-grounded theory, and policies once instituted should be monitored in light of theoretical developments and new evidence, but the accumulation of data from policy application could be construed as a test of theory, i.e., applied sociology itself could further basic research. Indeed, inasmuch as applied sociology would entail the continuous assessment of the relationships among theory, policy, and data, it would be more comprehensive than basic research.

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